

Washington, D.C. - Congresswoman Linda Sánchez returned to the nation's capital today to join House and Senate Democrats as they unveiled their "Honest Leadership, Open Government Act", which serves as an aggressive reform package intended to reverse the Republican abuse of power while hoping to restore the American people's trust in their government.

"The cost of corruption in Republican-run Washington is felt by families in Southern California and across America in the form of higher gas prices and higher prescription drug costs," said Congresswoman Sánchez. "While Republicans reward the wealthy and special interest groups, the priorities of the American people remain forgotten. That is why Democrats are offering real reforms to clean up Washington."

Congresswoman Sánchez unveiled the "Honest Leadership, Open Government" Act in the Great Hall of the Library of Congress with her fellow Democratic Members of Congress, and was joined by an audience of good government groups working to protect the public trust and force Congress to focus on the priorities of the American people.

"The reform package that congressional Democrats proposed today will clean up the Republicans' corrupt 'pay-to-play' system and give Americans the open government they deserve," continued Sánchez.

The Honest Leadership and Open Government Act will focus reforms on four key areas:

- It will close the revolving door between government and K Street lobbying firms by strengthening the ban on lobbying by former Members of Congress and senior government officials after they leave to work in the private sector, and require lawmakers to disclose when they are negotiating private-sector jobs to shine the light on conflicts of interest.
- It will fix the gift and travel rules that allowed the Jack Abramoffs of the world to buy Republican influence in Congress, ensuring that legislation will never again be written in smoke-filled back rooms by industry lobbyists.
- It will put an end to the K Street project, in which Republicans have limited political access to corporations and lobbying firms who hire Republicans and contribute heavily to Republican campaigns.
- It will increase accountability in government, and allow the public to see exactly what their elected representatives are doing in Washington.

House Democrats returned to Washington, DC for an issues conference this week, while their Republican counterparts delayed the return of Congress until the very end of January, in a futile attempt to give their former Majority Leader Tom Delay time to finish his trial in Texas and return as their leader.

"Such an audacious act of putting one man's political career over the interests of all Americans is just one of the many examples of Republican abuse of power that prompted me and my fellow Democrats to take action. America can and will do better," concluded Sánchez.